

REMARKS

The Applicant wishes to thank Examiner Sotelo for the helpful and courteous discussion by telephone held with his U.S. and Canadian representatives on May 19, 2006. At that time, Applicant's representatives argued that a frame having a plurality of receiving members each adapted to receive a hollow container, such that each of the hollow containers depends from the frame and are detached from one another, is nowhere disclosed or suggested in the cited prior art of record. The following is intended to expand upon the discussion with the Examiner.

The rejection of claim 16 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, is obviated by appropriate amendment.

The Applicant has amended claim 16 to replace the term "one or more of said containers" with "a corresponding container", to define that one or more receiving members can have attached thereto a corresponding container.

In view of Applicant's amendment, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5 and 8-15, and 17-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chester et al. (US 5,235,929) in view of Ritson (US 6,454,123).

Applicant respectfully submits that the Chester et al. reference does not disclose or suggest the invention of the claims, as presently amended.

As discussed with the Examiner by telephone on May 19, 2006, the cited prior art, and in particular Chester et al., does not teach nor suggest a frame for attachment to an underside of a dock structure having, *inter alia*, a plurality of receiving members each adapted to receive a hollow container, such that each of the hollow containers depend

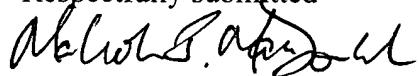
from the frame and are detached from one another. In fact, Chester et al., teaches that the sides of adjacent floatation means or containers are adhered to one another using adhesive to prevent lateral movement thereof. The arrangement taught by Chester et al. does not permit the replacement of individual containers that have become worn or damaged. Conversely, in the present invention individual containers can be easily replaced, without having to make substantial repairs to the frame and/or dock structure.

In view of the deficiencies in the art, the present claims are not *prima facie* obvious, and, accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Applicant submits that the present application is now in condition for allowance and early notice of such action is earnestly solicited. If any final points remain that can be clarified by telephone, Examiner Sotelo is respectfully encouraged to contact Applicant's attorney at the number indicated below.

Applicant hereby petitions the Commissioner for Patents to extend the time for reply to the notice dated February 14, 2006 for one (1) month from May 14, 2006, to June 14, 2006. A duly completed credit card authorization form is attached to effect payment of the extension fee.

Respectfully submitted



Malcolm J. MacDonald
Reg. No. 40,250
Tel: (703) 837-9600 Ex. 24

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